which would be benefited by the proposed road was one lakh of rupees. The road was only 4 miles ong; much land had not to be acquired, as the road would mainly pass through *poramboke* lands and a small road had already been opened by the people; and all that was necessary for the Government to do was to make it cartable and fit for traffic.

Dewan's reply.—The people have now cut a 12 ft. road. The question of taking up similar roads and improving them is under consideration. When the question is settled, this road will also be considered.

61. Deplorable condition of the village roads and traces in the Neyattinkara taluk and some suggestions for their improvement.

Mr. N. K. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Neyattinkara Taluk) began by saying that he made representations at the seventeenth session of the Assembly in regard to the improvement of some of the important roads and traces in the Neyattinkara taluk, but that the works still remained unattended to. He said that the repairs to Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road, and the trace from the 5th mile, M. S. road, to the 3d mile, Balaramapuram-Kattakada road, were urgent.

The first-mentioned road was 9 miles in length and it connected 20 congested villages. It was the only road leading to the town and there were several departmental and aided vernacular schools, two Proverti Cutcherries, one police outpost and two important markets within the area covered by it. Since 3 small bridges and half a dozen culverts had not been constructed, the road was practically useless for a large part of the year. The Member added that it was too much for the people to undertake the work and requested that the Public Works Department might be directed to take it up at an early date. As for the trace referred to, it was only $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles long; the 3rd mile of it passed through paddy fields and joined the Ooruttambalam road; and the trace required widening and improving. At the Valianathara paddy fields which were only 50 yards long the trace ended abruptly and re-appeared from the other end of the *ela*. The Member prayed that the trace itself might be made continuous and converted into a cart road with two culverts at that place. The trace was originally made by the people and taken up by the P. W. D. for maintenance, and, if improved, it would be of considerable benefit to the villagers of Pallichal, Nemam and the adjoining villages.

The Member observed that, in reply to his representation last year, the Dewan had stated that Government would attend to such works as required the services of an expert and pointed out that these two works required the services of an expert. Though orders had been issued for the preparation of estimates for the construction of the necessary bridges and culverts on the Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road, it was not known whether anything further had been done in pursuance of those orders.

In conclusion, the Member said that the matter had been repeatedly represented at the previous sessions of the Assembly and that he had only to remind the Government that it could not brook further delay.

Dewan's reply.—The estimate is under preparation in regard to Amaravila-Ottassekharamangalam road. No estimate has yet been prepared in regard to the other road, viz., the Nemam-Ooruttambalam trace. Inasmuch as the trace has been taken over for maintenance, I think the P. W. D. is bound to improve and maintain it. I shall ask the Chief Engineer to have an estimate for the work prepared in the next two months and carry out the work in 1098.

62. Need for improving irrigation in the Neyattinkara Taluk.

Mr. S. J. Williams (Member, Neyattinkara Taluk) stated that, though Neyattinkara is one of the biggest taluks of the State with an area of 233 square miles and very thickly populated, it was one of the most poorly provided in point of irrigation. From the time of the last Settlement up to 1921, the paddy fields underwent a reduction from 14,819 acres to 14,143 acres, 676 acres having evidently become silted

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

up. Even these 14,143 acres were not being served by the existing system of irrigation. The *elas* were irrigated by numerous tanks, of which 150 were classed as major and Government had taken certain steps to improve them. These tanks had become greatly silted up and their holding capacity had considerably declined. Government allotted some money in 1096 to improve two of these tanks; and at that rate it would take 75 years to improve all the major tanks by which time nearly all of them would again get silted up. The existing feeding channels of these *elas* did not serve the purpose for which they were intended, as, in almost all cases, the main channels ran through the middle of the *ela* with the result that during excessive rains the channels got flooded and the fields became silted up. As an example, he mentioned the breach in the Kottukal *ela* which lost about 135 *paras* of paddy lands in 1080 and caused a loss of revenue to the extent of about Rs. 2,330. Since then, there had been a further loss of 375 *paras* of paddy land. The Member, therefore, suggested that feeding channels better adapted for the distribution of water might he provided. He said that it would be safer to divide the main channel into two branches and take them along the sides of the *ela*. He also urged the imperative necessity of improving the existing water facilities and providing new ones and suggested an extension from the right bank channel to the Pachipara dam. In 1064, the Government spent about Rs. 5,000 for the construction of a dam at the Aruvikara falls in the Maranallur *pakuthi* in order to provide better water facilities for the taluk, but for some reason or other the work was abruptly stopped. The Member suggested that the work might be resumed and the channels laid out whereby the existing fields would be benefited and vast areas of new fields would be opened for paddy cultivation, besides supplying drinking and bathing water to people who lived in places like Tirupuram, Nellikkakuzhi, Karumkulam, Kazhuvur, Nellimudu, Balaramapuram, etc.

Dewan's reply.—I need not add anything to what I have said about rain-fed tanks and *elas* to the previous speakers. With reference to the Aruvikara dam, the Chief Engineer says that it requires a thorough investigation before anything is decided upon. I shall ask him to take up that investigation.

63. Irrigation and other needs of the Pakuthies comprised in Group II of the Trivandrum Taluk.

Mr. N. Madhavan Nair B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) prefaced his observations with the remark that all the inhabitants of the taluk except those residing within the town were agriculturists and that they lived entirely on agriculture. The Member said that the most important and pressing need of the taluk was irrigation for which the most essential thing was an unfailing water supply, and that in the absence of any artificial system of irrigation in the taluk, the people depended entirely on rain-fed tanks for water. Though there were a good many tanks and water-courses in the taluk, all of them were practically useless for purposes of irrigation, having been either utterly neglected or encroached upon by adjacent land owners, with the result that the ryots had to look to the advent of the monsoon, which, however, was both unsteady and inopportune. He cited the failure of the last Kanni crop as an example, when Government had to sanction remission of tax, and referred, in passing, to the want of a uniform principle in granting remission, which was due to the neglected condition of the irrigation works, and to the unsatisfactory economic condition of the people of the taluk, as compared with that of the people of other taluks, combined with the absence of co-operation among them. He prayed that Government might go to their rescue and take the initiative in the matter.

The Member thought that unless a separate Irrigation Department for the whole State under an experienced and capable officer thoroughly sympathetic with the people was constituted and worked hand in hand with the Agricultural Department, the problem of irrigation in the State could not be solved.

The Member suggested the construction of the following major irrigation works entirely at Government cost:—

(1) *The restoration and repair of the Anattazhachira at Pallipuram.*—This was the most important of the irrigation tanks in the taluk and the main source of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly